

**Statement of the Honorable Dan Burton  
Chairman -- Committee on Government Reform  
Before the Committee on House Administration  
March 7, 2001**

**Introduction**

Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Hoyer, thank you for inviting me to testify in support of my committee funding request. I'll try to make my remarks brief and just address the main issues.

I've submitted a very responsible budget for the Government Reform Committee. I've asked for a 6% increase this year. I've asked for a 4% increase for next year. That's an average of 5% a year. I don't think I can be any more reasonable than that.

**A Full Agenda**

You have all of the numbers we've submitted, so I won't go into the details. I do want to talk for a few minutes about what this Committee does. This is a Committee that works hard. We held 250 hearings during the last Congress. We reported more than 90 bills to the House floor. We got several good nuts-and-bolts management bills enacted last year.

Some of our work has been well-covered by the media -- the White House e-mail investigation, the campaign fundraising investigation -- I'm sure you're all familiar with those. We did a lot of good hard work on those issues. At the same time, a lot of the work we do doesn't get that kind of press attention, but it's just as important:

- We've investigated safety problems with childhood vaccines. For example, some of you may not be aware that many childhood vaccines have mercury additives. What impact does that have on our children? Nobody knows for sure.
- We're holding hearings on the explosion of autism among our children. The rates have doubled or tripled. There isn't nearly enough research being done to find out why.
- We've held hearings on the energy crisis that's hitting every region of the country.

These are issues that had been neglected for a long time. They don't get the kind of press attention that some of our other hearings do, but they're very, very important -- and we're going to continue working on them in this Congress.

We're also beginning an investigation into racial profiling. We're going to examine the high rates of billing errors that cost the taxpayers billions of dollars every year. So we have a lot on our plate.

I'd like to make one other point. Everyone recognizes how important oversight is. We have a responsibility to oversee how the Executive Branch spends the money we approve. This committee takes it's oversight role seriously. During the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress, we produced 11 investigative reports. I brought them with me so you could see them. They cover everything from the Justice Department to the President's clemency decisions to the Anthrax vaccine to financial management at Federal agencies. Writing these reports is a huge project all by itself. But these reports also represent months of hearings and document requests and interviews.

I also brought with me the investigative reports produced by the House's other 16 Committees. There were two. I think you can see the difference. Now other Committees do a lot of important work. They do a lot of legislative work. But I think I'm justifiably proud of the serious oversight that we do at Government Reform.

### **Majority/Minority Allocations**

I have a few points to make about the issue of Minority Resources. Six years ago, we took control of the House. We set a goal of getting all of the Committees to give one-third of the resources to the Minority. That's been tough on our Committee. When we were in the Minority, we got less than 20%. We had a long way to climb.

With this budget, we're there. It hasn't been easy. It's required some sacrifices. But both sides were committed to making it happen. We've still got a few details to iron out, but we'll do that over the next few days. Mr. Waxman has been very cooperative in this process. We worked out a transition period so we can turn over the last couple of slots as they become available through attrition. That's been very helpful, and Henry, I appreciate that.

I feel like we've bent over backwards to make this happen. I hope that we get some recognition for coming as far as we have. I'd like to say especially to the Democrats on this Committee -- you've been pushing hard for this. We've given you what you wanted. Now show us you recognize that by voting for this funding resolution.

**Statement of Honorable Lane Evans, Ranking Democratic Member,**  
**Committee on Veterans Affairs**

**Before the**  
**Committee on House Administration**  
**March 7, 2001**

Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Hoyer, I welcome the opportunity to testify before you today with Chairman Chris Smith, on behalf of our funding request for the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. The Veterans' Affairs Committee funding request for the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress is the product of consultation between the majority and minority. It is a Committee request. I urge your favorable consideration and approval.

Under the request proposed by Chairman Smith, there will be 34 total Committee staff. Of these total staff, 23 - or 67.6 percent - will be majority staff. Eleven or 32.4 percent will be Democratic staff.

Of the Committee staff funding request, 34.2 percent is expected to be allocated for Democratic staff in the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> session. A similar percentage is also expected to be allocated for Committee Democratic staff in the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress, 2nd session.

Office space is an entirely different matter, however. The office space now allocated to the Democratic staff is totally inadequate. It does not, in fact, accommodate the current ten members of the Democratic staff. It totals 935 square feet - that is the total space available before a copy machine, fax machines, desks, chairs, file cabinets, bookcases, and other essential office equipment is in place. I cannot accommodate fellows, interns or others who could contribute to the work of the Committee. There is no space for them nor will there be space for the 11<sup>th</sup> member of the Democratic staff provided by the funding requested for this Congress.

Chairman Smith and I have discussed this. He is sympathetic and indicated his willingness to work with me to find a reasonable solution. I ask for your assistance as well. There are two office spaces which would be good solutions. One is room 3F, an office located directly across the corridor from the space occupied by the Democratic staff. I understand it is assigned to Congressman Saxton under the auspices of the Joint Economic